



# Spark Gap

Vol. 35, Issue 4, April 2018 *MARC - Serving Central Indiana Communities for thirty-five years*

## ***ON OUR MARC:***

I would say welcome to Spring but I think it has made a wrong turn and doesn't want to ask directions. So, welcome to Sprinter!! It's okay, I didn't mind all the cold weather but it is now time for it to really be spring!

May is the start of a summer full of Amateur Radio related activities. It kicks off with the Dayton Hamfest in May, followed by the Strawberry Fest, Saturday June 9th and Field Day, June 23 & 24th. Then September brings the Heartnut Fest and the Radio Club annual picnic. I hope everyone will get a chance to stop by some of the activities.

Our speaker for April will be Bob Jones on weather. We won't have a speaker for May as many people maybe at Dayton. We are working on a speaker for June. We will let you know once we have confirmed the speaker. If you are willing to speak on a subject, please let one of the officer's know.

Hope to see you on Saturday.

Jacki, KI6QOG

President





*Birthdays for the month of April:  
KI6QOG – Jacki Frederick  
KD9FHI – Bob Cloutier*

## **Space Station Commemorative Slow-Scan TV Transmissions Prove Extremely Popular**

Thousands of slow-scan television (SSTV) enthusiasts around the globe enthusiastically tracked the International Space Station (ISS) to download commemorative SSTV images transmitted as part of the ARISS-Russia Cosmonautics Day (International Day of Human Space Flight) celebration on April 11 – 15. Another ARISS-Russia SSTV event is planned for May. As of mid-week, upward of 9,000 images relating to the 40th anniversary of the Interkosmos Project period of the Soviet space program were posted for viewing. The SSTV images, stored on a computer in the ISS Russian segment, were transmitted by RS0ISS on 145.800 MHz using PD-120 SSTV protocol, using a Kenwood TM-D710E transceiver. SSTV images have been posted from the US, Europe, South America, Asia, Africa, Australia, and New Zealand.

Certificates are being distributed via e-mail to those who posted reception reports and images. The certificate commemorates the 20th anniversary (in 2016) of the Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) program.

To be eligible for the ARISS SSTV Award, participants should receive and decode at least one picture during the activity period. Image quality does not have to be perfect, but good enough to identify the picture. Partial images are acceptable.

To qualify, upload your decoded images and complete the application. The deadline is May 15, 2018. Details and a list of ARISS SSTV Award-winning stations are available on the application page.

# ARRL: How can we help?

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

Recently, I received this email from a reader:

“Hi Dan,

“Hope you’re doing well. I have a couple of questions about the ARRL. I’ve been reading your blog and other sources, and it’s clear that the ARRL is in a little trouble. I have to say, though, that as soon as the current administration in D.C. notices that some of their friends can make money off of amateur radio bandwidth, the whole amateur radio service is in very serious jeopardy. The only way I can think of to counter that would be an organization like the ARRL, and I think there’s really only one organization like the ARRL. Is that not true? If it is, how can we help?”

I replied that it is true that there’s only one organization like the ARRL. In the past, there have been groups that have tried to compete with the ARRL, but they’ve never really taken off. It’s an incredible amount of work to set up an organization like the ARRL and none of the alternates have been able to get to critical mass.

The second question—How can we help?—is the big question. Here are a few thoughts:

- Join the ARRL. If you’re not currently a member, join. You’ll have little or no influence, if you are not a member.
- If you are a member, but your friends are not, encourage them to join. The more members the ARRL has, the more influence it will have. This is common sense, but the ARRL doesn’t really seem to care about this. In the past, I’ve encouraged the ARRL to set a membership goal of 25% of licensed radio amateurs. I honestly don’t think this is asking too much, and I’ve never heard a good argument for them not to do this. They continue to ignore me, and the percentage of licensed radio amateurs that are ARRL members continues to decline.
- Take an interest in ARRL matters and let your director and vice director know your views. Get your friends to do likewise. Get on the mailing lists for the board meeting agendas and minutes. To do this, log into the ARRL website, click on “Edit your profile,” then “Edit email subscriptions.”
- Invite your ARRL elected officials—your division director, vice director, and section manager—to talk at your club meetings. Be prepared to grill them on issues that you think are important.
- Run for office yourself. I ran for Great Lakes Division vice director twice. Unfortunately, I lost both times, but even running is a way to have an impact. I’d like to see the “loyal opposition” get organized and challenge the status quo, especially in divisions where I think the current director is making bad decisions.

Having said all that, there are ways to make an impact besides playing ARRL politics:

- Get on the air. It’s easier to lose bands if we’re not using them. Encourage others to be active.
- Be an Elmer to those that need it.
- Teach classes to help those who want a license get a license and to help those who are already licensed to upgrade their licenses.

- Be an ambassador for amateur radio, especially to related groups, such as the “maker” groups that have sprung up around the country. Make sure that they know about your amateur radio club and the classes and exam sessions that you offer.

I’d love to hear any other thoughts that you all may have on this. I really do think that at this point, we need to inundate the ARRL Board and staff with input from the membership. While they may have a long history of ignoring the membership and just going about their own merry way, now is really a time of change, and this might be the right time to set the ARRL on a better path.

+++++

*When he's not getting all worked up over ARRL politics, Dan blogs about amateur radio at [KB6NU.Com](http://KB6NU.Com), teaches amateur radio classes, and works CW on the HF bands. He's the author of the No Nonsense amateur radio license study guides and The CW Geek's Guide to Having Fun with Morse Code.*

Ed. --- The opinions expressed in this article is that of the author and not necessarily those of the Spark Gap.

---

## **Former “Coast to Coast AM” Radio Show Host Art Bell, W6OBB, SK**

04/14/2018 ----- ARRL News

Former “Coast to Coast AM” and “Dreamland” radio host Art Bell, W6OBB, of Pahrump, Nevada, died on Friday, April 13, at his home, the Nye County Sheriff’s Office announced. He was 72. A KSNV news report indicated that Bell’s family was with him when he died. The Sheriff’s Office said an autopsy would be performed.

“The cause of Bell’s death was yet to be revealed,” is how *International Business Times* put it in its obituary of Bell, lending an air of mystery to its account, much as Bell himself enjoyed doing on his long-running radio show that trafficked in conspiracy theories, the paranormal, and “dark matter.” Ham radio came up too, from time to time. In early 2004, Bell aired an extensive, live interview with then-ARRL President Jim Haynie, W5JBP (SK).

“Coast to Coast AM” was syndicated nationwide in the early morning hours and, at its peak, was said to have reached 50 million listeners. A decidedly unconventional yet distinctive radio host, Bell produced the show from his own studio in the High Desert of Nevada. Often, after his show was over, he would get together on 75 meters with a group of friends. He used the phonetics “Old Broken Bottles” for his call sign. Bell retired from “Coast to Coast AM” in the early 2000s, although served as a guest host as recently as 2010. The show’s current host is George Noory. Bell briefly returned to the air with “Art Bell’s Dark Matter,” which lasted several weeks on the SiriusXM satellite network, but subsequently got involved with another radio program, “Midnight in the Desert,” streamed via the Internet. He quit that show in 2015, however, citing “security concerns” at his home, reporting gunfire and repeated home intrusions; Bell said he believed someone wanted him to quit his shows.

Bell was born in Jacksonville, North Carolina, to US Marine Corps parents. He served in the US Air Force and was a medic during the Vietnam War, according to *International Business Times*, which also reported that Bell once operated a pirate radio station at Amarillo Air Force Base, playing anti-war music.

Bell was the author of the books, *The Arts of Talk*, *The Quickening*, and *The Coming Global Superstorm*.

His wife and a daughter survive. Bell also held the Philippines call sign 4F1AB.

— *Thanks to KSNV and International Business Times*

---

## **Amateur Radio featured at NAB Show 2018**

Once again, broadcasting professionals from around the world made the trek last week to Las Vegas for the annual National Association of Broadcasters convention.

The massive 2.25 million square foot convention, boasted more than 1,800 exhibitors, over 100,000 attendees, and \$20.3 billion dollars in trade.

To the many participants who were also ham radio operators the pilgrimage would not have been complete without their traditional visit to the ARRL booth.

In what has become somewhat of yearly pilgrimage, amateur radio operators from around the world, broke away from the hustle and bustle of the show floor and made their way to the lobby of the North Hall to talk over all things ham radio with the volunteer staff of the ARRL booth.

Ham radio operators from Australia, South Korea, Israel, Norway, Canada, England, Ireland, Peru, Brazil, Argentina, Japan, New Zealand, Germany, Belgium, Tanzania, Greenland, U.S. Virgin Islands, Poland, South Africa, Bulgaria, and Spain were among the visitors to sign in at the ARRL booth.

The ARRL booth is managed by Nevada Section Manager John Bigley N7UR and was staffed by volunteers from various Nevada amateur radio groups. ARRL Second Vice President Bob Vallio W6RGG and East Bay Section Manager Elect Jim Siemens AF6PU were also on hand to assist in the booth and to greet visitors.

Booth visitors were able to gain assistance in licensing, renewing their ARRL memberships, accessing ARRL services and programs, and how to find classes and examination sites in their local communities. League members were able to discuss issues which they felt are important to their personal enjoyment of amateur radio.

Wednesday evening the NAB again hosted its hugely popular Amateur Radio Operators Convention at the Westgate Hotel. Section Manager Bigley thanked the attendees for participating and welcomed them to Las Vegas. He also publicly acknowledged the ARRL volunteers for their work at the convention.

SM Bigley then introduced ARRL Vice President Bob Vallio who thanked NAB, Broadcast Supply Worldwide and Turner Engineering for sponsoring the reception. Vallio also thanked the NAB for once again endowing the ARRL with the booth.

..... Southgate News ..... April 2018

## UP – COMING ACTIVITIES AND HAMFESTS

**04/21/2018** – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.

Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

**05/04/2018** – 500 Festival Indianapolis Mini Marathon, Indianapolis

**05/18 – 19 - 20/2018** – Hamvention 2018 Green County Ohio Fairgrounds and Expo Center

**05/19/2018** – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.

Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

**06/09/2018** – WRTFD Strawberry Festival

**06/16/2018** – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.

Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

**07/21/2018** – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.

Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

**08/18/2018** – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.

Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

**09/15/2018** – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.

Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

**10/20/2018** – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.

Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

**11/17/2018** – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.

Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

**12/15/2018** – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.

Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.



RFinder WW Repeater Directory

<http://subscribe.rfinder.net>

# MID-SATE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club meets the **THIRD SATURDAY** of each month at the Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

See our website, [www.midstatehams.org](http://www.midstatehams.org), for maps on how to get to our meeting.

Everyone is welcome; you do not have to be a *HAM* to attend our meetings or a member of the club.

**WA9RDF Repeater:**

146.835/  
146.235 MHz  
(151.4 Hz PL Tone)

**Club Officers:**

President: Jacki Frederick – KI6QOG  
Vice President: Ron Schuetz -K9THR  
Secretary: Rhonda Curtis – WS9H  
Treasurer: Marlys Barr – KD9BHM  
Repeater Trustee - Chris Frederick – KQ9Y

**WA9RDF Repeater:**

443.525/  
448.525 MHz  
(151.4 Hz PL Tone)

**Weekly Net: Sunday evening 7:00 PM ARES/RACES members and ALL RADIO AMATEURS**  
146.835/146.235 MHz (151.4 Hz PL Tone)

**The Official Newsletter of the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club**

P.O. Box 836  
Franklin, Indiana  
46131

**Spark Gap Editor: Robert LaGrange N9SIU**

*Please send your articles to my email: [n9siu@yahoo.com](mailto:n9siu@yahoo.com) no later than the 3rd of the month*



*Special thanks to Johnson County REMC for the use of their community room for meetings and testing.*